

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Washington State Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

Who is eligible for transportation?

Washington State Medicaid clients who have no other way to get a ride to their medical appointment may be eligible. Your medical service must be covered by your Medicaid coverage, under the benefit services package. Check with the Broker who will determine if you are eligible for transportation. All rides must be for a medical reason such as a doctor appointment or dialysis.

Your medical problem should not be an emergency. If you have an emergency you should call 911.

Is transportation covered for non-Medicaid clients?

The Health Care Authority (HCA) provides some transportation for the clients under the state funded Children's Health Program and the Medical Care Services program (MCS), formerly called Disability Lifeline. The MCS program has no transportation benefit for mental health or substance abuse treatment services.

There is no transportation benefit for the "Take Charge" or "Family Planning Only" programs.

For more information about transportation benefits, contact the broker in your service area.

What type of transportation is available for me?

Brokers utilize the lowest cost available that is both appropriate and accessible to the client's medical condition and personal capabilities.

These may include:

- Low-cost pre-authorized resources, either prepaid post-reimbursed by a Broker:
 - Transit (public bus, including "ADA/Paratransit")
 - Gas vouchers at gasoline/service stations (prepaid) and mileage reimbursement for personally owned vehicles
 - Ferry tickets and toll fees

- Pre-authorized by and paid for by Brokers:
 - Volunteer drivers
 - Group vans or sedans
 - Wheelchair accessible vehicles

Who do I contact for transportation?

For a list of Brokers, their phone numbers and the counties they serve, go to:

<http://hrsa.dshs.wa.gov/Transportation/Phone.htm>

What is a Broker?

“Brokers” are contracted by HCA to authorize and pay providers for transport of non-emergency medical transportation for Medicaid clients.

Brokers decide the form of transportation a client gets:

- transit tickets/pass
- gas vouchers
- taxi
- van
- individual or group ride

Brokers decide who will transport you and will contract with companies within your area to provide transportation services to make sure you get to your appointments.

Brokers may also deny transportation requests that are not for medical services covered under your benefits services packages that are not appropriate to your needs and capabilities and to a provider outside of your local community when services are available within the local community.

Brokers try to use local transit when possible. If a client cannot use available transit, the Broker will ask the client's local primary care provider (PCP) to document why the client cannot use transit. Contact the Broker in your area for specific procedures.

What do Brokers do?

Brokers review eligibility to determine if you qualify and what type of transportation you require. The Brokers must choose the lowest cost method of transportation to meet Federal & State rules.

You may be required to share a ride with multiple individuals to reduce cost.

When do I ask for a ride?

It is recommended that you contact the broker at least 7-14 days in advance of your health care appointment. If you contact the broker with less than 2 business days' notice and it is not urgent, you will be asked to reschedule your medical appointment if transportation cannot be scheduled.

What do I need before I contact a Broker?

- Your current Medicaid ID card
- Your complete pickup address
- Time and date of your appointment
- Address and phone number of the medical facility
- Reason for your appointment
- Special circumstances, if necessary for transportation
- Return time, if known

What if I need ongoing appointments? Will I have to call every time I want a ride?

If you have re-occurring appointments, such as dialysis or other appointments that are ongoing, you can have your healthcare provider submit a letter requesting continued service.

What about return rides?

You can preschedule your return ride if you know approximately what time you may be done. Clients may be required to wait 30 minutes for the return ride from when their appointment ends. If it has been more than 30 minutes contact your Broker.

You can do a "will-call" when you are unsure of what time you may be done with your appointment. Speak with your individual Broker or transportation provider to determine their procedures.

Will I be transported to any Physician I choose?

You have the freedom to choose whichever doctor you feel best provides your medical services, however; Brokers will transport to local providers only, unless you have a documented medical need to travel out of your service area.

If you plan to see a provider outside of your service area, state rules require that all trips be documented and approved in advance. It may be that these transportation

services will not be covered if a local healthcare provider is available in your area. For more information contact the Broker in your service area.

I don't like my transport company, can I choose another one?

Clients may not select the transportation provider or the type of transportation.

If you have issues with your transport company, you must contact your Broker and work with them to resolve the problem or to find another source of transportation.

Why does the transport company pick me up so early?

Brokers or providers may ask the clients to be ready up to an hour before their medical appointment for local rides, or earlier for long-distance rides. Brokers may ask you to be ready so that the driver can transport more than one individual or ensure they can provide the equipment you need to quickly and safely get you to your appointment on time.

I have to ride with multiple people in a van, WHY?

Group rides are extremely common in Washington State for all kinds of reasons. These group rides are like airport shuttles; they are cost effective and get the job done timely.

Federal and State rules require the Broker to choose the lowest cost method that does the job.

What if I have concerns regarding my Broker?

Clients and providers who have worked with a Broker and are still not satisfied may contact HCA, Transportation Services –

By Fax: 1-360-664-0261

By Mail: Health Care Authority, Medical Transportation Services, PO Box 45532, Olympia, WA 98504-5532

By toll-free telephone: Medical Assistance Customer Service Center 1-800-562-3022

Or email: HCANEMTTRANS@hca.wa.gov